

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (new): A system comprising a computer and a control device,
wherein the computer executes a plurality of software and the control device connects to the
computer,
the control device comprising:
a control that generates operation data in response to operation of the control;
a plurality of data communication ports, each of which is assigned to one of said plurality of
software executed on the computer and is a path for transferring the operation data to the computer
to control a software assigned to a corresponding data communication port;
a setter that sets a different protocol to each of the plurality of data communication ports;
a port selector that selects one of the plurality of data communication ports;
a converter that converts the operation data in accordance with a protocol set to the selected
data communication port; and
a transmitter that transmits the converted operation data to the computer via the selected data
communication port, thereby controlling the computer via the software to which the selected data
communication port is assigned.

Claim 8 (new): The system according to claim 1, wherein the computer is connected
to the control device via a physical single cable, and transmission of converted operation data is
performed via the cable.

Claim 9 (new): A method of controlling a computer executing a plurality of software and connecting to a control device, the control device having a control and a plurality of data communication ports, said method comprising:

- generating operation data in response to operation of the control;

- assigning each of said plurality of communication ports to one of said plurality of software executed on the computer for transferring the operation data to the computer to control a software assigned to a corresponding data communication port;

- setting a different protocol to each of the plurality of data communication ports;

- selecting one of the plurality of data communication ports;

- converting the operation data in accordance with a protocol set to the selected data communication port; and

- transmitting the converted operation data to the computer via the selected data communication port, thereby controlling the computer via the software to which the selected data communication port is assigned.

Claim 10 (new): A machine-readable medium containing program instructions executable by a control device for controlling a computer executing a plurality of software and connecting to the control device, the control device having a control and a plurality of data communication ports, said program instructions causing the control device to perform the following steps:

- generating operation data in response to operation of the control;

- assigning each of said plurality of communication ports to one of said plurality of software executed on the computer for transferring the operation data to the computer to control a software assigned to a corresponding data communication port;

- setting a different protocol to each of the plurality of data communication ports;

- selecting one of the plurality of data communication ports;

- converting the operation data in accordance with a protocol set to the selected data communication port; and

- transmitting the converted operation data to the computer via the selected data communication port, thereby controlling the computer via the software to which the selected data communication port is assigned.